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Mayor Chris Coleman Announces 2011 Sustainable Saint Paul Awards

SAINT PAUL – Mayor Chris Coleman honored twelve groups and organizations that have made great strides in environmental conservation during **the 2011 Sustainable Saint Paul awards today.**

“These twelve recipients represent the best in sustainable initiatives for this past year,” Mayor Coleman said. “Their dedication to making our environment better every day is an attitude I greatly admire. I am happy to be giving these awards to people and efforts that continue to make Saint Paul a national leader on environmental policy.”

The awards pay tribute to individuals and organizations that have demonstrated a commitment to environmental stewardship through leadership in their respective categories. By sponsoring these awards, Mayor Coleman encourages all residents, businesses, community groups and non-profits in Saint Paul to implement similar projects. These efforts further enhance the City’s quality of life and make Saint Paul the Most Livable City in America.

Here are the 2011 Sustainable Saint Paul Award Winners:

1. Environmental Education and Awareness Award – recognizing programs and concepts which develop skills and attitudes necessary to understand the inter-relatedness among humans, culture and environment

Humboldt High School

Humboldt High School has gone through significant changes in recent years, working to increase student achievement, engage students with the natural world, and connect them more comprehensively with their school and neighborhood. One initiative was to become an environmentally themed school, providing youth with hands on experience in environmental conservation.

Now, Humboldt offers students with projects like construction of raised vegetable beds for urban agriculture projects; handicap-accessible vegetable and herb beds; native plantings in numerous gardens around the school that create habitat; rain gardens to capture water run-off from roofs and other hardscaping; a Welcome Garden at the front entrance of the school, and Victory garden adjacent to the athletic fields. These physical manifestations of the new Humboldt instill teachers and students with pride of place; promote student/school identification; and allow the school community to integrate more fully with the surrounding West Side neighborhood.



2. Youth Leadership Award – recognizing the accomplishments of an individual student, school group or youth club

WasteFree Rondo Partnership

In 2010 the Waste-Free Rondo Partnership which includes the Rondo Avenue Inc. Board of Directors, Arts-Us, Coolidge Hauling, Eureka Recycling and the MN Pollution Control Agency, engaged community-based partners and volunteers to:

- Clean-up the Rondo Days parade route and festival grounds before and after the event, with a specific focus on diverting recyclables and compostable material;
- Significantly reduce the amount of waste generated at the Annual Senior Dinner;
- Organize neighbors to set out personal recycling bins for public use during the parade; and
- Educate community members of all ages on the importance of environmentally sustainable practices.

The Waste-Free Rondo Partnership focused its energy on engaging and educating youth, creating the “*Collard Green Team*” to divert waste and inform attendees of Rondo Days events – many of whom were their own parents and grandparents – on the importance of protecting the environment.



3. Green Practices Award – recognizing organizations which have developed innovative practices which lower environment impact.

Hmong Village (Kos Hmoob)

The Hmong Village is a collaborative of over 300 indoor merchant stalls, fresh produce vendors, bustling kitchens and offices geared toward the region's large population of Hmong residents, many of whom live in Saint Paul.

Co-founder Yong Yia Vang worked with Ramsey County's Public Health staff and consultants to design and implement recycling and composting into this large commercial operation and honor the Hmong culture. The goal was to be able to recycle all cardboard, paper, bottles, cans and food waste. Food waste is collected by the restaurants and produce vendors and goes to a pig farmer. Bottle and can bins are in all public areas. Mixed paper bins are used in the office area of the building. Cardboard is recycled by all vendors. Hmong Village has demonstrated that planning for recycling and composting early pays off



4. Exceptional Environmental Steward – recognizes the extraordinary efforts of an individual who for years helped his neighbors help the environment.

Pete Emeot

For the past 25 years, Pete Emeott had been organizing three crews of volunteers to go to homes of seniors and disabled persons within District 1 neighborhoods to move and transport these materials to their reusable, recyclable and waste materials to a community collection site.

In the past five years, Pete had doubled the number of individuals that he assisted and served over 40 seniors/disabled people at the 2010 clean up event and a massive amount of material that is collected. Pete ran two crews with oversized trucks and extended trailers, and one crew with a large pick up truck. These crews each ran through specific routes returned to the drop off site at least 3 times each.

5. Natural Resources Restoration Award – honoring community groups and residents who replant, restore, and reclaim the urban environment into opportunities for the social and physical renewal.

Friends of the Mississippi River's Mississippi River Gorge Stewardship Program

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) secured additional funding to bring their successful Mississippi River Gorge Stewards Program to Saint Paul. So for the past three years, FMR has organized several educational and restoration events at Crosby Park with a total of 486 volunteers contributing 1,173 hours of volunteer labor towards restoration activities at the site and an additional 166 people participated in interpretive tours.

FMR's Mississippi River Gorge Stewards Program aims to build a network of trained, dedicated volunteers and a sustainable approach to ecological management of native plant communities. The Crosby site has been extremely popular with volunteers and FMR plans to continue engaging the community in restoration activities at the site well into the future.



6. Energy Efficiency & Conservation Award – honoring efforts to reduce energy consumption, energy costs and green house gas emissions.

J & J Distributing

In order to reduce their energy costs and lessen their carbon footprint, J & J Distributing took the initiative to replace their entire lighting system with Light Emitting Diode (LED) lighting. With a \$1.3 Million loan from the Saint Paul Port Authority's Trillion BTU program and rebates from Xcel Energy, they also redesigned their entire refrigeration system. J & J replaced 44 inefficient refrigeration units with three energy climate systems. And the loan will be paid off with the energy savings.

In addition, heat recovery system was installed as a part of the new refrigeration system. The waste heat will be used to heat J& J's future office space and green house. It's estimated that J

& J will save \$175,000 annually in energy costs.



7. Clean-up and Beautification Award – honoring groups or individuals demonstrating commitment to the improvement of the Saint Paul community, environment and beautification of our surroundings

District 1 ComeClean! Initiative

The District 1 “Come Clean” Project grew out of a recognition by neighbors in the District 1 area that litter was an increasing problem in the SunRay/Suburban area and other parts of the city. Sue Moyer, a District 1 resident, met with the District Council and City Staff to discuss possible ways that the community and the City could address the growing problem of litter and provide a vehicle for education and pro-active behavior. The ComeClean! initiative was developed and brought the community together.

- Businesses, including Byerly’s, Sonic Foods and Taco Bell, were recruited to “adopt” trash receptacles placed in strategic locations next to public transportation stops. Public Works provided trash containers and bags.
- Boys Totem Town volunteered a group of young people to pick up litter along the I-94 freeway bridges and intersections on a monthly basis.
- Creek Point Apartments provided a group of volunteers to pick up litter in the area surrounding their complex and on Suburban Avenue.
- The planning committee assisted in the development of a logo and decals that will be used in educational materials and to indicate participation in the program.



8. Transportation Options – recognizes day-to-day or long-term efforts which are improving fleets, alternative fuels, car-sharing, transit, biking, etc.

First National Bank Building

Through a partnership with ElectriCharge Mobility and Weber Electric the First National Bank Building (FNBB) has positioned itself for the future use of electric vehicles (EV). In the past year, they installed Minnesota's first public EV charging station which can charge two electric vehicles at the same time using either a 110-volt or a 208-volt outlet.

In addition to promoting the use of electric vehicles, FNBB continues to promote alternative modes of green transportation such as biking, walking, carpooling, ride-share, and public transportation for their employees. Over the past two years FNBB has installed covered public bike racks that can accommodate over 25 bicycles and created a secure indoor bike rack storage area that can accommodate over 55 bicycles.



9. Green Product Award – for organizations which have developed innovative products or services of low environmental impact.

GovDelivery

As a provider of digital communications for government clients, GovDelivery is by its nature an environmentally focused company. By offering subscribers digital messages (email, SMS, social media) through digital communication management platform, GovDelivery helps its clients reduce budget expenditures associated with printing and mailing of publications. Clients also reduce the costs and paper waste associated with a traditional mailing system.

GovDelivery serves more than 400 government organizations throughout the United States - including the City of Saint Paul – as well as Canada and Great Britain at the local, state, regional and federal levels.



10. Green Building- Residential Design Award – honoring the design, development, and construction of new green residential buildings.

The Lyric at Carlton Place

The Lyric at Carleton Place is a market-rate rental building situated on University Avenue. Xcel Energy's Energy Design Assistance team worked with the Johnson Brothers, The Cornerstone Group, BKV Group, Yen Chee Design, and Jaeger Construction to incorporate elements for greenscapes, increase energy efficiency, infiltrate storm water, increase waste management during and after construction, reduce noise, and improve air quality.

The Lyric is an early demonstration that quality sustainable housing along the Central Corridor Light Rail line is important. The building consumes approximately 22% less energy per year than an average multi-family apartment building of the same size. The sustainable design strategies implemented resulted in a 15% electrical demand savings and over 37% natural gas demand savings per year. The Lyric is another showcase green building on the Energy Innovation Corridor.



11. Waste Reduction, Recycling and Composting Award– honoring programs or projects that contribute to the development of waste prevention, reduction, recycling and composting.

Warners' Stellan Appliance

Warners' Stellan has responsibly recycled appliances for years and their warehouse facility includes photo-sensing lighting, an energy-management system and an "economizer" cooling system. In the last few years, Warners' Stellan took additional steps to address a huge environmental concern within appliance retail operations – packaging. They chose to initiate new practices that capture close to 85% of their waste and recycled it. Materials recycled include; scrap metal, cardboard, wood pallets, steel banding and Styrofoam. To decrease excess packaging and Styrofoam usage, Warners' Stellan purchased a Styrofoam compactor. This compactor is one of only two in the state.

In addition, plastic wrap is collected en masse and donated to Merrick, Inc., a nonprofit providing vocational opportunities to adults with disabilities. Merrick sells this material to a company for reuse.



12. Sustainable City Staff – recognizing City employee who continually go beyond their normal duties to incorporate sustainable practices into their every day activities.

Parks and Recreation Department, Operations Division – Rain Garden Installation

In 2010, the Department of Parks and Recreation resurfaced a quarter-acre parking lot at the Como Central Service Facility. To implement best management practices and manage storm water runoff from the nearly half-acre parking lot watershed, Parks and Recreation created a partnership with the Capitol Region Watershed District and the Ramsey Conservation District to design and implement a rain garden with the capacity to capture and infiltrate a 100-year storm event. Conservation Corps Minnesota provided the labor force to install plant material and final erosion and sediment control measures to complete the rain garden. Now, all water falling within the one-half acre watershed is directed to the rain garden and infiltrated on site. This water is intercepted before entering the storm sewer, protecting the water quality of the Mississippi River.

